US Army Corps of Engineers
Headquarters

USACE Army Family Action Plan 2009

Conference Report-Out

BUILDING STRONG

US Army Corps of Engineers
Headquarters

What is AFAP?

"USACE Army Family"

- **Soldiers**
  - **Active and Reserve**
  - **Single and Married**
  - **Sole Parent and Dual Military**
  - **Enlisted, Warrant Officer, and Officer**
- **Family Members**
  - **Active and Reserve**
  - **Enlisted and Officer**
  - **Dependant Children**
- **Retirees**
- **Civilian Employees**

A F A P

… addresses the demands of Army life

… contributes to Soldier and Family standards of living

A F A P

… improves our standard of living

… legislative changes

… policy/regulatory changes

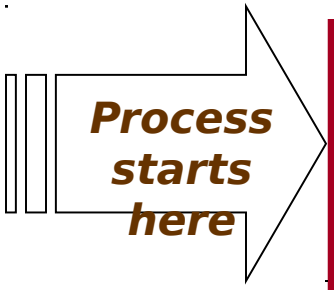
… program/service improveme…

Completed Issues

A F A P

… makes our Corps and Army a better place to live and work!

The Process



Issue Submission/Prioritization

- Submission of issues to AFAP staff
- AFAP coordinator reviews issues; identifies subject matter experts
- Delegates prioritize most critical issues at **District/Division Level**
- Community feedback via newspapers, briefings, website
- next higher proponent for

Issue Review/Resolution

Commander's AFAP Steering Committee

- Reviews action plans and progress
- May redirect focus of issues
- Issues closed by Steering Committee
- Community feedback

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- Quarterly or semi-annual meetings
- Approves action plans and progress
- May redirect focus of issues
- May enter new issues
- Community feedback

Issue Management

- Issues beyond installation purview submitted **through HQUSACE**
- Selected installation delegates attend HQUSACE AFAP
- AFAP staff continues to work issues

USACE 2008 AFAP "Sweet 16" Issue

- **Issue #634: Death Gratuity for Civilians Killed in Military Contingency Operation**

- **Scope:** Deployed DOD civilians who have no immediate family members may designate a non-related beneficiary; however, only up to 50% of the gratuity can be paid to said beneficiary. In accordance with title 5 USC Section 8102a(d)(E)(4), the balance of the gratuity remains with the Department of Labor. Unless there is an amendment to the law, no more than 50% of the amount payable as a death gratuity will ever be payable on behalf of the deceased.

- **Recommendation:** Amend above section to allow 100% of the death gratuity to go to the designated person(s) if there are no immediate surviving family members.

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Issue Prioritization
Group One

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Strengths

1. **Strength: CSC (Community Support Coordinators)**
   - **Explanation: Helps promote USACE goal 1c(1). This is a new position which enhances Family Readiness Program.**
2. **Strength: DCA (Deployment Coordinator Assistants)**
   - **Explanation: Helps promote the expeditionary workforce. This is a new position within USACE which enhances recruitment and placement of OCO.**
3. **Strength: Community Support**
   - **Explanation: Bringing in external and internal support agencies to enhance the Family Readiness Program.**
4. **Strength: Pre-Deployment briefings**
   - **Explanation: Increased awareness for deployees and Families.**
5. **Strength: Assign a sponsor to a family**
   - **Explanation: Strengthens family ties to the organization and the deployee.**

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Challenges

1. **Challenge: Re-integration process**
   - **Explanation: Not standardized for civilians (like Military)**
2. **Challenge: Pre/Post-Medical for civilians injured overseas**
   - **Explanation: Currently only addresses immediate recovery, not long term needs.**
3. **Challenge: Casualty Assistance Program SOP**
   - **Explanation: Program needs to be standardized to provide equal support for all deployees and family members.**
4. **Challenge: Inter-service support**
   - **Explanation: Increased coordination is needed because roles not clearly defined.**
5. **Challenge: Communications**
   - **Explanation: Although improved, it continues to require enhanced command emphasis.**

Issue Prioritization 1
Group One

Issue #93: Title: USERID-Password Administration and security system (UPASS) access for transferring Corps employees

Scope: Currently there is not a system in place that allows for a seamless UPASS Password transference from one USACE organization to another. When employees transfer to a new duty station within the Corps, access to the network is delayed. The inability to transfer UPASS Passwords results in lost productivity, and the ability to effectively and efficiently integrate into the new duty station.

Group Recommendation: Implement a seamless UPASS Password transference capability Corps-wide.

Issue Prioritization 2
Group One 1

Issue # 84: Title: Employee Liability While Operating Government Vehicles

Scope: Under AR 735-5, Policies and Procedures for Property Accountability, as applies to Department of the Army Civilians (DAC), employees may be liable for up to one month's pay for acts of simple negligence that cause loss, damage or destruction of government property. Many private insurance carriers will not insure government employees solely for the operation of a government vehicle. As a result, some employees refuse to drive government vehicles, impairing the ability to carry out the mission.

Group Recommendation: Exempt DAC employees from the liability imposed by AR 735-5 while operating a government vehicle in an official capacity, unless gross negligence is evident.

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Issue Prioritization
Group Two

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Strengths

1. **Health Screening**
   Excellent pre-deployment health screening
2. **Clothing**
   Very good clothing and equipment provided
3. **Living Conditions**
   Living conditions in theater greatly improved
4. **Security**
   Security in theater for civilian employees good
5. **Communication Home**
   Good communication systems in place in theater

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Challenges

1. No real FRG's for individual augmentee's and civilian families.

2. Supervisors need to better understand re-integration (reservists returning to a civilian job).

3. Better mental health assistance (not just FOH/EAP) for returning deployed civilians.

4. Wounded warriors caught between the Army and the VA system.

5. Poor Attendance at FRG Meetings.

Issue Prioritization
Group Two

Issue #105: Title: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Child Care Support

Scope: The majority of the 41 USACE districts are not located on or near military installations. Access to child care for both USACE Civilian Employees and Service Members is not available at the majority of USACE districts. USACE child care support will improve the quality of life by providing parental convenience, peace of mind and increasing the productivity of the USACE employees and Service Members.

Group Recommendation:

Provide child care support for USACE Civilian Employees and Service Members.

Issue Prioritization
Group Two

Issue: #107 Title: Army Knowledge Online (AKO) Awareness for Deployed Department of Army (DA) Civilians and Family members

Scope: The awareness of the benefits of AKO is inconsistent among deploying Department of Army (DA) Civilians and their Family members. Due to security requirements deployed DA Civilians do not have access to commercial instant messaging; they must rely only on AKO Instant Messaging (IM). Without proper awareness of AKO IM an undue financial and communication burden is placed on DA Civilians and Family members during deployment.

Group Recommendation: Provide awareness to DA Civilians and Family members of the useful benefits of AKO prior to deployment.

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Issue Prioritization
Group Three

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Strengths

1. **Strength** Having a Deployment Coordinator
   - **Explanation:** Have coordinator at each District
2. **Strength** Emphasis of Chief of Engineers
   - **Explanation:** Good support from the top
3. **Strength** Volunteers
   - **Explanation:** AFAP Group- We are an effective team
4. **Strength** Implementing AFAP in COE
   - **Explanation:** Making headway
5. **Strength** Volunteers for Deployment
   - **Explanation:** People standing up to deploy

Mobilization/Deployment/Family Readiness Challenges

1. **Challenge** Lack of Support
   - **Explanation:** Inconsistent Support
2. **Challenge** Lack of Family Support
   - **Explanation:** No Military Installation Close
3. **Challenge** Lack of Interest in Program
   - **Explanation:** Deployment and Family Support
4. **Challenge** Lack of Knowledge
   - **Explanation:** Of available programs
5. **Challenge** No Assigned Budget
   - **Explanation:** No budget for local level

Issue Prioritization
Group Three

Issue #100: Title Department of Army (DA) Civilians and Families Medical Treatment Options

Scope: OCONUS DA Civilians are not consistently made aware that their federal employee health benefits cover off post medical treatment options. Due to this lack of knowledge, DA Civilians and Families depend on Army Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs) for their medical needs where they are lowest priority, resulting in untimely appointments. Without timely medical treatment Families suffer undo stress, loss of work and unresolved medical conditions.

Group Recommendation: Train OCONUS DA Civilians prior to overseas assignment of medical services and benefits available in their command's area of operation

Issue Prioritization
Group Three

Issue #119: Title Department of Army (DA) Civilians Paid Parental Leave

Scope: DA Civilians do not receive paid parental (maternity/paternity) leave. They are required to use saved annual/sick leave or leave without pay (LWOP). Private sector employers offer short term disability for its employees that cover their full pay or portion of their pay while on parental leave. DA Civilians and Families suffer financial hardships because they are forced to use all of their leave or go without pay.

Group Recommendation: Provide DA Civilians with for weeks of paid parental leave

Most Critical Active AFAP Issues

1. Issue #497: Distribution of Montgomery GI Bill Benefits to Dependents

2. Issue #38: Family Member Employment in the Civil Service System

3. 3 Issues Tied:

    - Issue #521: In-State College Tuition

    - Issue #524: Military Spouse Unemployment Compensation

    - Issue #634: Authorize 100% of Death Gratuity

4. 2 Issues Tied:

    - Issue#545: Federal Retiree Pre-Tax Health Insurance Premiums

    - Issue#591: Military Spouse Preference Across All Federal Agencies

Top Six Conference Issues:

6. Army Knowledge Online Awareness for Deployed DA Civilians and Family Members

5. DA Civilian Paid Parental Leave

4. USACE Childcare Support

3. DA Civilian Liability While Operating Government Vehicles

2. UPASS Access for Transferring USACE Employees and Contractors

1. OCONUS DA Civilians and Families Medical Treatment Options